

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☐

Property Name: Greenbrier Road House Inventory Number: D-746
Address: South side of Greenbrier Road Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no
City: Cambridge Zip Code: 21613 County: Dorchester
USGS Quadrangle(s): Blackwater River
Property Owner: Black Water Farms Inc. Tax Account ID Number: 001545 000204
United States of America, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 23 Tax Map Number: 72
Project: Proposed Tower Site: Bucktown, Dorchester County, Maryland Agency: Maryland Dept. of Budget and Management
Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company
Preparer's Name: Stacey Streett and Stephanie Foell Date Prepared: 6/24/2005
Documentation is presented in: Proposed Tower Site: Bucktown, Dorchester County, Maryland
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes Listed: ☐ yes
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description:

The residence located on the south side of Greenbrier Road (D-746), at the end of a long lane. The Harriet Tubman Marker (D-281) is located on the west side of the lane off of Greenbrier Road. The property is opposite of the radio/transmission towers at 2946 Greenbrier Road. The residence faces north toward the towers. The building is a typical I-house form. It is two stories by three bays wide and one room deep. The residence was constructed circa 1935, and it has been heavily modified. The first-story, full-width front porch has been fully enclosed and an enclosed, first-story, shed-roof, one-bay-wide-by-one-room-deep porch is located on the south elevation.

Asbestos siding clads the main portion of the building. The siding is rotted away in areas near the foundation. The main entrance is located on the facade of the enclosed porch. A bay window is located to the east of the entrance and two windows are located to the west. Replacement, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows constitute the fenestration throughout the building. Shutters flank the windows. Paired windows pierce the first story of the side elevations.

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MHT Comments:

Andrew Lewis
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

7/11/05
Date

Blumentz
Reviewer, National Register Program

7/11/05
Date

200501970

The porch enclosure on the south elevation is clad in vinyl siding. The south elevation of the enclosure contains an entrance and a multi-sash bay window. A wide eave overhang is only located over this elevation of the enclosure. A metal stovepipe pierces the southeast slope of the roof, above the bay window.

Corrugated metal clads the side-gable roof, and the porch roofs are clad in asphalt shingles. The eaves are raked with a moderate overhang, and gable returns accentuate the cornice. A brick chimney punctuates the ridge.

Large, mature, deciduous trees shade the façade and west elevation of the residence. An agricultural field bordered by a stand of trees is located east of the residence. Ancillary frame structures are located south and west of the residence. The one-story structure directly south of the residence functions as another residence. It is a frame shed that has been heavily modified with modern additions. Replacement, six-over-six, and one-over-one, double-hung sash windows are installed throughout the building. An extended, shed roof tops the building. Corrugated metal and asphalt shingles cover the roof. A small, shed-roof structure, which appears to be a former outhouse, is located to the west of the secondary residence and north of a mature maple tree. The structure is clad in vinyl siding. Another frame structure is located south of the maple tree. It is a one-bay-wide, gable-front shed with an extended roof over the west elevation. It is also clad in vinyl siding. This outbuilding is adjacent to the southwest elevation of the secondary residence.

Significance

General Project Area Description

Bucktown, Maryland, is located in Dorchester County, approximately ten miles south of Cambridge. Bucktown is primarily an agricultural area that is adjacent to the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. The terrain is relatively flat with the large majority of land used for agricultural purposes. The project area directly abuts the Little Blackwater River on the west, and much of the terrain is marshland in this area. The project area has a low level of elevation, approximately 5 feet above sea level.

Primary crops grown in Bucktown include corn and soybeans. Large industrial poultry houses of recent dates of construction are also present on several farms. Portions of the project area adjacent to the Blackwater Wildlife Refuge have a substantial tree canopy flanking the roadways.

History of Bucktown

Bucktown was formed from the land holdings of Bartholomew Ennalls. A native of York County, Virginia, Ennalls owned thousands of acres of land in southern Maryland in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Virtually no scholarly information exists on the establishment or development of Bucktown. It is largely ignored in scholarly histories of Dorchester County, and few primary or secondary resources relating to the town are available. A detailed review of maps of Dorchester County indicates that the name Bucktown first appears on maps in the late eighteenth century.

It is described as "five miles from a railroad station. A fertile farming country surrounds it. . . . about forty people in ten or twelve dwellings measure the size of the quiet town where the ring of the hammer on the blacksmith's anvil is no more heard. No town growth."

Tobacco was the primary crop cultivated in the area. It was exported to England for sale, and provided a certain degree of wealth to many of the tobacco plantation owners. After the onset of the Revolutionary War, when trade with England was suspended, corn, wheat, and rye plantings replaced tobacco as the most prominent agricultural crops. Livestock were also raised in larger

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Date

numbers. The crops and animals were used for both home consumption and to supply the army. These crops remained the primary products planted until after the Civil War. After that time, grain crops became less common.

Bucktown is perhaps best known for its association with Harriet Tubman, a slave who was a critical figure in the Underground Railroad. Because Tubman was born into slavery, very little precise information about her early life is available. Consequently, much misinformation about Tubman has been disseminated throughout time. Reliable sources indicate that she was born circa 1820, possibly in or near Bucktown.

She spent her earliest years at the Brodess plantation, which was located just outside of Bucktown. Later, she moved with her owner to other locations within a ten-mile radius of Bucktown. Local tradition states that Tubman may have received a severe head wound that afflicted her for the rest of her life at the Bucktown Store in the 1830s. However, the present Bucktown store was not constructed until circa 1870, according to Dorchester County tax records, so the extant store could not have been the site of the encounter. Her family worshipped at Bazel's Chapel. The original building associated with Tubman's family burned and the present chapel was constructed circa 1911.

Tubman gained her freedom in 1849, when she escaped to Philadelphia. She eventually settled in Auburn, New York, where she established a home for elderly former slaves. Three buildings in Auburn with associations to Tubman have been designated National Historic Landmarks by the Secretary of the Interior. These include her own residence, the Harriet Tubman House, and the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged. The church where she worshiped in Auburn, Thompson AME Zion Church is also designated.

Historic Resources in Bucktown

Relatively few built resources are present within the Bucktown vicinity. This is due to the prevalence of large swaths of agricultural land in cultivation. The majority of buildings in Bucktown are residences. Almost all of the buildings more than 50 years of age are farmhouses from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Most of the residences retain their basic forms, which include I-houses and smaller cottages. Many of the residences have side or rear additions. Most have been re-sided in either aluminum siding or asbestos shingles. Replacement windows and enclosed porches are other common alterations. The conditions of the residences range from excellent to poor, with several near collapse.

Few historic agricultural buildings associated with the farmhouses remain (although several of the properties were inaccessible and only farmhouses were visible from the right-of-way). New agricultural buildings consist primarily of large-scale poultry houses sheathed in metal.

An abundance of houses dating from the late 1950s through the present are found in Bucktown. Most are modest, single-story houses with minimal architectural detail. These newer houses are located on small plots of land in linear patterns, unlike the houses of earlier eras, which were located on large plots of farmland.

Several modest frame chapels are located in the vicinity of Bucktown. They are associated with African-American congregations in the area.

The Bucktown Store is the sole resource associated with commerce in the area. As with other general stores in small towns, it likely served the town with basic supplies. However, Bucktown's proximity to Cambridge allowed for a reasonable commute into the larger city for commercial goods.

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The historic and cultural landscape within Bucktown conveys the historic agricultural use of the land. Although historic crops in Dorchester County included tobacco and grains and not the currently omnipresent soybeans, the land has remained cleared and used for agricultural purposes. Other components of the landscape are used as part of the Blackwater Wildlife Refuge and appear to be in their pristine natural condition. Substantial sections of the region, most notably in the area surrounding the wildlife refuge, are covered with thick stands of tall trees.

Detailed Property History

The residence on Greenbrier Road is located on the parcel that was once part of the vast Brodess Plantation. Mary and Joseph Brodess owned a plantation on a 400-acre parcel west of Transquaking River during the early nineteenth century. The parcel of land was formerly known as "Eccleston's Regulation Rectified." Hugh Eccleston came to Bucktown from England in the mid-late seventeenth century and acquired several tracts of land in Bucktown and the Cambridge vicinity (Jones 1966:308; Mowbray and Mowbray 2000:61, 71; also see the National Register Nomination form for Yarmouth (D-83), which describes land tracts held by the Eccleston family from the seventeenth-nineteenth centuries). Moreover, earlier maps (see Griffith's 1794 map) verify that the Ecclestons owned land extending from the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge to Greenbrier Road and west of the Transquaking River.

Joseph Brodess and his brothers inherited the parcel of land in 1800 from their father, who acquired it from the settlement of a debt in 1792 (Clinton 2004:6-7). An 1877 map of Dorchester County (see Lake et al.) does list the Brodess family on the parcel of land. However, land records regarding the Brodess family in Bucktown were not available. In 1852, probate records from 1777-1852 that were stored in the Dorchester County Courthouse were destroyed by fire (Mowbray and Mowbray 2000:vii-viii). Therefore, the exact boundaries of the Brodess Plantation during the first half of the nineteenth century are not known.

Harriet Tubman was born and raised by her enslaved parents, Ben and Harriet Green Moss, on the Brodess Plantation. They worked for Edward Brodess during the first half of the nineteenth century. The results of a recent archeological investigation by the National Park Service remain inconclusive regarding the specific location of Harriet Tubman's birthplace on the Brodess Plantation (see National Park Service website and Dorchester County Department of Tourism brochures).

The construction date of the residence is too recent (circa 1935) to be considered the birthplace of Harriet Tubman. Other sites throughout the Eastern Seaboard, such as her homestead in Auburn, New York, are associated with Harriet Tubman's productive life and her involvement in the Underground Railroad. "The place of Tubman's birth is not known definitively, although it is assumed that she spent at least some of her childhood on the Brodess Farm in Bucktown. Recent archeological work at this site has been inconclusive, and the investigation is continuing. There are no Tubman-era buildings remaining at the site, which today is a farm. Adjacent to the Brodess Plantation is the 27,000 acre Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, which contains natural features thought to be like those of Tubman's time (see National Park Service website and Dorchester County Department of Tourism brochures)."

Determination of Eligibility

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

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B. that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or

C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

The residence on the historic Brodess Plantation, on the parcel of land located across from 2946 Greenbrier Road, is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The property is not associated with any events that are important in the past. Therefore, it is not eligible under Criterion A. Although the property parcel was once part of the Brodess plantation, the present building is not directly associated with Harriet Tubman. Research indicates that some residents in Bucktown believe that this is Tubman's actual birthplace, it seems as if the presence of the nearby historical marker (which contains general information only) has led people to assume that the nearby house is also associated with her. However, this building was constructed long after Tubman left Bucktown and is not associated with her. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion B.

The building is not eligible under Criterion C. It is a typical example of an I-house, which is a common house form in Maryland, and it has also undergone substantial alterations. The National Park Service conducted archeological investigations on the historic Brodess Plantation. Their investigation has not definitively identified any standing structures associated with the life of Harriet Tubman. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion D. The property does not retain a high degree of integrity. It has suffered a loss of integrity of design and materials. The original porch on the façade has been fully enclosed and an addition has been added to the south elevation. Furthermore, the residence has been clad in replacement siding and replacement windows have been installed. The outbuildings surrounding the residence have been heavily modified by modern additions.

References:

Clinton, Catherine. Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom. Little, Brown and Company. Time Warner Book Group, New York, 2004.

Finding a Way to Freedom Driving Tour: The Underground Railroad in Dorchester and Caroline Counties in the 1850s. Brochure. Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area, Cambridge, Maryland, with support from the National Park Service; Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network; Dorchester and Caroline Counties, MD; and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

Griffith, Dennis. Map of the State of Maryland. "Lower Eastern Shore," 1794.

Harriet Tubman...American patriot and the icon for what is known as the Underground Railroad was born in Dorchester County, MD. Brochure. Dorchester County Department of Tourism, Cambridge, Maryland. Edited reprint from the MD Commission for Celebration 2000.

Jones, Elias. New Revised History of Dorchester County, Maryland. Rev. 1966, Tidewater Publishers, a division of Bay Country Publishing Corporation, Cambridge, Maryland, 1925.

Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson. Districts of Talbot, Dorchester Counties, MD. "Bucktown District," 1877.

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Maryland Historical Trust. Maryland Inventory of Historic Property Forms and National Register of Historic Places Forms for Bucktown and surrounding areas of southern Maryland.

Meredith, Jay, Bucktown property owner. Telephone correspondence regarding Bucktown Village Store, Meredith House, Lewis House, and Brodess Plantation, April 2005.

Mowbray, Calvin W., and Mary I. Mowbray. The Early Settlers of Dorchester County and their Lands. 2 vols. Reprinted 2000, Willow Bend Books, Westminster, Maryland, 1981, 1992 by Calvin W. Mowbray.

National Park Service website: <http://www.harrietstubmanstudy.org/places.htm>, accessed March 2005.

Weeks, Christopher, ed. Between the Nanticoke and the Choptank: An Architectural History of Dorchester County, Maryland. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press and the Maryland Historical Trust, 1984.

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D-746
Greenbrier Road House
Dorchester County, MD

S. Foell

8/2004
MD SHPO

Facade

1/4

ART-2611 <NO. 3>R21
763 7817 -1 11-4-24 (0412)9



D-746
Greenbrier Road House
Dorchester County, MD
S. Streett
4/2005
MD SHPO
Facade
2/7

ART-2611 <NO. 28 >053
763 7817 -1 N 11-4 21 (042)0



D-746

Greenbrier Road House

Dorchester County, MD

S. Streett

4/2005

MD SHPO

Southwest elevation

3/7

ART-2611 <No. 26 >851
263 7812 -1 11-2 12 (04200)



D-746

Greenbrier Road House
Dorchester County, MD

S. Streett

4/2005

MD SHPO

West elevation

4/7

ART-2611 <NO. 27 2852
763 7817 -1 11 11-2 04 (04208)



D-746
Greenbrier Road House
Dorchester County, MD
S. Streett

4/2005

MD SHPO

Outbuildings, view from the west

5/7

ART-2611 <NO. 24 >848
763 7817 -1 N N-2-15



D-746

Greenbrier Road House

Dorchester County, MD

S. Street

4/2005

MD SHPO

Outbuilding, North elevation

6/7

ART-2611 <NO. 25 >058
763 7817 -1 N H N I- 2182 592



D-746

Greenbrier Road House

Dorchester County, MD

S. Streett

4/2005

MD SHPO

View of driveway to residence from S. side of
Greenbrier Rd.

7/7